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R. BROCK, *Greek Political Imagery from Homer to Aristotle*. (London & New York: Bloomsbury, 2013). Pp. 252. ISBN 978-1-78093-206-4. STG £100 (Hb).

A. McAuley (Cardiff University)

Roger Brock has assembled a vast array of diverse literary material in order to investigate a phenomenon that, remarkably enough, remains as commonplace today as it was in the Greek world: the use of figurative imagery to represent and discuss politics. The emergence and development of such political imagery from Homer to Alexander is the topic of this D.Phil-thesis-cum-monograph, which treats the device as a ‘historical and cultural phenomenon which runs in parallel with the Greek “discovery of politics” and later becomes a ‘western tradition’ in its own right (*xi*). While such heavy-handed notions of Greek exceptionalism may sit uneasily with many readers (myself included), in the context of this stated objective Brock’s work admirably succeeds, although his investigation raises as many questions as it answers. The body of source material he examines is highly impressive, ranging from the Homeric epics and fragments of Archaic poets to tragedy, comedy, forensic oratory, and philosophy, and he deserves a great deal of credit for so easily navigating so many genres as he transitions masterfully from close philological readings of these texts to a broader consideration of their historical context. The book is divided into eight chapters of manageable length, the first five of which consider recurrent themes in Greek political imagery, while the latter three provide a diachronic account of their evolution

across the Archaic Period (c.750-480), the Classical Period (480-c.400), and the odd twilight of the fourth century leading to Alexander.

His first chapter (1-24) begins with the logical jumping-off point of 'Gods as Kings, Kings as Gods', providing a fitting topic for addressing Greek re-appropriation of prevalent Near-Eastern associations between monarchs and the divine. The penchant is only partially adopted by Homer, and responds to developments in Pre-Socratic philosophical thought in the Greek world. Associations between kings and the divine recur as contact with Persia increases, leading towards the fourth-century notion of the king as embodying law. The second chapter – 'State as Household and Family' – tackles an image that is slower to emerge in the fifth century but one that gains traction as Athenian autochthony is emphasized, as are notions of kinship among the Athenian *demos* (25-43). The 'Shepherd of the People' image represents another Greek adaptation of a Near-Eastern idea which functions primarily in a military context in Homer before reappearing as an allegory of monarchical rule in the fourth century (43-52). Further discussion of pastoral imagery in the Hebrew Bible would have been a welcome addition to this comparatively short chapter. The final two chapters deal with two images that Brock argues 'are directly a legacy from Greek antiquity' and thus not previously attested elsewhere: 'The Ship of State' (53-68) and 'The Body Politic' (69-82). While the former image does not appear in Homer it first becomes commonplace as a metaphor for the collective constitution of a polity before the emphasis is placed on the skill of certain individuals above others in guiding the

ship. Interestingly, though all too quickly, Brock argues that this ship is best understood as a lone merchant vessel navigating an intimidating sea, rather than a warship in a flotilla. The latter image of the body politic (69-82) likewise begins as a holistic device in which the citizen body is beset by general diseases of *stasis* before, like the ship of state, becoming a vehicle for discussing the role of expertise in politics and society.

The final three chapters consider the development of political imagery in general in response to the changing social and political milieu of the three Periods he discusses. Initially, Brock argues the imagery of the poets articulates the justification of elite or privilege people in the community in an Archaic context (83-106) before the advent of Persia on the Greek stage and the rise of radical Athenian democracy greatly change the timbre of the discourse. The imagery of the fifth century (107-146) revolves around the opposition of democracy and tyranny, and thus freedom and servitude, as Athens appropriated the metaphor of the state as a household into its own symbol of domestic harmony. The shifting political ground of the fourth century and its prevalent debates on the merits of different types of authority brought monarchy back into the picture, as the law (*nomos*) was elevated to the status of a king or god, only for the two to converge in the person of Alexander. Thereafter, Brock's epilogue argues, the king would reign in political discourse as he did in temporal reality (197). Perhaps Polybius would claim otherwise.

Brock's arguments throughout are buttressed with copious (and indeed impressive) endnotes that given the specificity of the argumentation would perhaps better

have been printed as footnotes. As other reviewers have noted, the typesetting of this monograph is immensely frustrating. With paragraph breaks that are few and far between, the unfathomably small text is set at 45 lines per page in the body and 49 per page in the chapter endnotes, making this quite literally a difficult read for all but the most eagle-eyed. For an expert work which engages so closely with questions of Greek vocabulary and phrasing, it seems to me that it would have been better to include the Greek text rather than transliteration. The bibliography and indices are copious, and the copy-editing flawless.

Brock's method, though, does present some causes for concern. While he argues that much of this political imagery is a Greek phenomenon (*xi*), he traces the roots of two of his clusters of imagery (King as God, Shepherd of the People) to the Near East, and the Persian emphasis on the body of the king also makes this third theme a logical eastern importation as well. Unsurprisingly given the nature of his literary material, what begins as an investigation into 'Greek' imagery rapidly becomes an investigation of 'Athenian' imagery and the line distinguishing the two is increasingly blurred, as is his classification of what is 'political' imagery, strictly speaking, and what is not. Yet this material raises another question: if, as he argues, these political images are 'largely drawn from experience' and driven by 'essential familiarity' – and thus seemingly not the creation of one author – then the inclusion of non-literary source material would seem to be imperative, particularly given the artistic personification of many of the concepts discussed. In the end, the reader is left wondering whether

this imagery is really Greek, and if it is purely political. But the fact that these questions arise is testament to the strength of Brock's work and the import of the subject he has pioneered. The ship he has cast out to sea, I hope, will continued to be sailed, either by this helmsman or another.

S. BUTLER (ed.), *Deep Classics: Rethinking Classical Reception*. (London & New York: Bloomsbury, 2016). Pp. 368. ISBN: 978-17426-052-7. STG £70 (Hb).

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This interesting collection of essays is a product of the Bristol Classics department's long-term exploration of classical reception, begun by Charles Martindale and his colleagues in the last century. It might be seen as an attempt to reboot that exploration; the chapters come from a conference organised in 2014 by Shane Butler, Professor of Latin at Bristol 2012-15. 'Deep Classics' is inspired by the notion of 'Deep Time', the sense of unimaginable temporal depth experienced by nineteenth-century pioneers of geology as they contemplated rock strata which represented a past vastly older than Archbishop Ussher's, which began in 4004 BCE. Deep Classics represents an attempt to mediate between 'classical tradition' (seen as emphasising the cultural messages transmitted from antiquity) and 'classical reception' (stressing the creative nature of the reception of those messages. Its focus is instead on a 'tertium quid', the very pose by which the human present turns its attention to the ... distant past'. This move is characteristically Kantian in